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ABSTRACT

Teachers' educational methods to procure or enhance parent involvement in their children's learning processes in schools in German-speaking countries are examined in this comparative study. This Austrian replication of a study conducted in the United States (Epstein, 1986) administered questionnaires to 124 first-, third-, and fifth-grade teachers and 1,196 parents of children in grades 1-5. Despite incompleteness of the American survey results, findings indicate that American teachers are more open-minded about and committed to increased parent involvement. Factors include differences in educational histories, political structures, and degrees of teacher influence; the American kindergarten, which stimulates initial parent participation; and educational science and school administration interest in parent involvement in the United States. Although Germanic parents have greater parental rights than their counterparts in the United States, these rights have stressed constitutional rather than educational issues that can be solved through cooperation. Six tables are included. (30 references) (LMI)

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Parent Involvement in the USA and in Austria[1]

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1. The reason for the comparative study

During the 1986 AERA conference Joyce Epstein presented remarkable data concerning Parent Involvement (PI) in the USA: "only" 30% of parents are prepared to assist the teacher with school trips or fund-raising; "only" 60% of teachers "regularly" encourage parents to read with their child; "only" 35% "regularly" advise parents as how best to make use of the domestic environment for educational purposes (Becker/Epstein 1982, Epstein 1986).

American PI data is data which the advocates Austria or Germany can only dream about. And something else was impressive : Unlike similar research in German-speaking countries, the survey undertaken by Epstein did not target the "external characteristics" of cooperation: How, where, for how long... do teachers and parents get together and what are their views or opinions? Her survey posed questions concerning the nature of the educational methods teachers suggest to parents in order to involve them in the learning activities of their children at home.

These discoveries motivated us to recreate the Epstein survey. We wanted to produce comparative data and delve into the previously uninvestigated "educational methods" of teachers regarding the role of parents in German-speaking countries.

2. The debate about parental participation in the USA and Austria

First an outline as to how "Parent Involvement" is discussed in literature in two quite different ways in Austria, Germany and the USA, namely:

1. the political aspect: i.e. constitutional law
2. the educational science aspect.

From a political point of view the main concern is the problem of "parental rights": From the question of choosing the child's school through to the right of involvement in all levels of

[1] Paper presented at the AERA annual meeting Boston 1990

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education policy, of school and of teaching.

For those involved with educational science it is a question of whether the demand for parental involvement is theoretically justifiable.

A look at German vs. American literature on "Parent Involvement" shows a curious distribution. In German literature the dominant problems are those which arise from the political questioning about parental rights and influence, in American literature educational science dominates.

If the educational science aspect of the subject in both regions is explored, it is apparent that the number of "empirical surveys" in German literature is limited. It is dominated by historical, speculative, and normative surveys. The empirical surveys are, as mentioned, concerned first and foremost with the views of parents and teachers towards cooperation, and with the question of compliance of legal requirements (Neubauer/Krumm 1989). The numerous empirical works in the USA concern themselves less with attitudes than with the question if and how PI effects pupil-, parent- and teacher behaviour, and they develop and evaluate programs (e.g.Griffore/Boger 1986, Haskins/Adams 1980, Seeley 1981)[2].

A consequence of these different research traditions is that Austria and Germany produce extensive and detailed official regulations concerning parental rights - and they commit the teachers to particular means of cooperation with the parents. In

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[2] Every year the AERA programmes contain dozens of titles which refer to empirically orientated surveys. PI almost never reaches the agenda at either conferences involving German speaking nations or at meetings of EARLI (European Association of Research into Learning and Instruction). In Europe only English educational science has paid any consistent serious attention to PI(Craft et al., 1980, Bastini 1987,1988).

contrast, there are no corresponding national laws in the USA.[3] Such regulations are confined to school- and school-district level[4]. Federalism in the USA reaches far further down the hierarchy than in Austria or Germany.

A further consequence is that in the USA there is a whole host of publications specifically directed at teachers or parents in order to promote educational cooperation and PI. Many school boards and surprisingly many private institutions[5] produce and distribute them; and also the teacher-training programme contains a relatively high number of courses about PI. Austria and Germany, however, seem to be Third-World Countries in the light of these differences in research and teaching.

3. Educational Justification of Parent Involvement

The theoretical position has been thoroughly dealt with elsewhere (Krumm et al. 1990c; Krumm 1989). Therefore we shall only give a brief summary here. We begin with two assumptions:

1. If the level of schol achievement is to be improved, efforts for a better school- and teaching quality promise less than efforts directed at improving learning conditions in the family.

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[3] Lombana, for example, when considering the rights of parents, merely mentions and comments upon 'The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act' and the 'Education for All Handicapped Children Act', and then argues that "in addition to legal rights of parents, educators must become advocates of other parental rights that are not necessarily supported by legislation. These rights affirm that parents are their children's primary sponsors and are taxpaying school supporters. As a result, they have the right to be involved in certain important aspects of the school.These rights, which must be acknowledged and supported (!) if a partnership is to develop, include...". She proceeds by listing many parental 'rights' that have judicial backing in Austria and Germany (Lombana 1983, 10-12).

'Bundesministerium...1988' gives information about the legal position in Austria, Mohrhardt 1979 and Nevermann 1977 amongst others about that in FRG.

[4] I thank Don Davis for this personal information. I had to turn to him because the school authorities in Maryland, were Becker/Epstein carried out their research, did not reply to a written inquiry. (V.K.)

[5] Addresses of these institutions can often be found in books about PI (e.g.Shea/Bauer 1985,327).

The reason for this assumption: 'School' is by definition the optimal systematic combination of learning conditions, the family is not. It is only a secondary place of learning.

2. Learning at school builds upon the prerequisites which are there in the family, and the learning process in school is deeply influenced by the parallel learning process in the family.

From this it follows that when teachers want to have an interest in the optimal learning of their pupils they must consider how their pupils learn in those areas for which the family takes responsibility, and possibly (carefully) educationally influence the family learning environment in the interest of the children entrusted to them (Krumm 1990b).

4. Becker and Epstein's Survey and its Austrian Counterpart

The American survey consists of a questionnaire for teachers and parents. Both teacher and parent questionnaires are compatible. The survey of teachers can be regarded as the model. What we wanted to find out was wether, and if so, how teachers attempt to get parents involved in the learning process of their children. The parents were asked the same kind of questions. This provides criteria as to the effect on the parents of the teachers' efforts.

The questionnaires were completed by teachers of first-, third-, and fifth-grade children[6], and by parents of children in grades 1 to 5[7].

We translated both sets of questionnaires as faithfully as possible, paying attention however to Austrian school conditions.

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[6] The American survey took place in Maryland. When we speak of 'the USA' or 'the American teachers' then that is a little exaggerated.

[7] Becker and Epstein also conducted a survey of principals but as this was not possible in Austria we shall not dwell on it here.

We deal in a later report with the several weaknesses of the American study as well as with the problems that arose translating and adapting the survey into German and carrying it out in Austria.

The German drafts were first tried out on teachers and parents[8].

In Austria a random selection of teachers[9] teaching classes 1 to 6 were surveyed and these teachers than questioned a random selection of four German speaking parents[10], each one having two boys and two girls.

5. The Results

Unfortunately we now have to dampen any possible eager expectation. Joyce Epstein did not provide us with the tapes with the US-data or at least the basic count. Instead, after much urging, we received the following reply:

" There has been no way to get back to data to provide you with disk or tape and documentation. It was an informal study and our documentation is done on our own papers in a variety of shorthands and notes. To make it interpretable to someone else would take more time than I have been able to find.

The best we can do is provide you with reports from the teachers and parents so you can compare your results with ours."

Therefore we can only continue by comparing the published US-results with the corresponding Austrian findings. This is better than nothing, but nevertheless not fully satisfactory:

1.Becker and Epstein published at most 50% of their data.

2.They did not systematically compare the teacher- and parent data, but analyzed it separately and published different parts from both the teacher- and parent surveys. Comparisons of teacher-parent differences are therefore largely impossible.

3.They described their complex analyses (factor- and regression

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[8] I would here like to thank Joyce Epstein for her help in solving the many difficulties due to the different nature of the two school systems.

We would like to thank here the Austian teachers for their readiness to participate in the investigation.

[9] The teachers concerned were a random selection from the "Bundesländer" of Salzburg, Vorarlberg, Oberösterreich and Burgenland. It is impossible to say whether the following data is representative of the whole of Austria.

[10] We did not consider immigrant parents in this survey. We feared they would have too great a difficulty in filling in the questionnaire. Immigrant parents should be INTERVIEWED in a separate survey.

analysis) so loosely that reproducing them with the Austrian data was not fully possible.

4. They only used data suitable for their regression analysis. They disregarded data which would have required more complicated statistical procedures, and by so doing limited information.

The following fragmentary comparisons however do afford several noteworthy insights into the teacher-parent cooperation situation in both countries.

6. Parent involvement in the USA and Austria

This situation necessitates that, in the following, we can merely compare the relatively small amount of data published by Becker and Epstein with the corresponding Austrian data.

6.1. Comparisons of the teacher data

1. Characteristics of the Samples

First of all a quick look at the samples. Are the questions posed sufficiently similar for a comparison? See Table 1 for information:

(TABLE 1)

Out of all the factors listed in Table 1 only the "grade level" in the samples corresponds significantly to the interesting 'dependant' variables. Therefore the above question can be answered in the positive - if when with a certain qualification: The American sample contained 13% "special teachers" who had been selected by the principal and about whom there is no information as to which classes they work in[11]. This 13% could cause a distortion of the figures. For the purpose of the survey we shall assume that their work is spread evenly between all grades[12].

6.2. The Practice of Parent Involvement according to Teachers

Becker and Epstein have summarized the answers to the three

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[11] Of course the samples have differing characteristics which are meaningful for the teachers' use of PI. Therefore, in both investigations, considerably more data was collected which allows information about the samples than is provided in Table 1. This US-data was not published either.

[12] In total the questioning in Austria took the form of 254 evaluable teacher questionnaires which corresponds to a return quota of 81%. Only teachers from grades 1, 3 and 5 were questioned for the comparisons here.

central questions concerning PI methods. They write: "Teachers were asked several questions about each of 14 specific 'teaching techniques' that involve parents in learning activities at home with their children. First, they were asked about their use of each technique - whether they had used it frequently during the current school year, occasionally, or not at all (and, if not at all, whether they had used it in the past). Then they were asked to decide whether the technique would work in their teaching situation or, if not, whether it was for lack of parent cooperation or because parents lack sufficient skills to carry out the task effectively... Answers to these items were combined into a (five-point)[13] 'index of support'for each technique: No parent cooperation; insufficient parent skill; workable but not used; occasional use; frequent use (Becker/Epstein 1982, 7-8)." Table 2 contains the result of this 'index of support'.

We shall not discuss the research into the effectiveness or the educational value of the individual methods here. This is done elsewhere[14]. Here we shall limit ourselves to the similarities and differences between American and Austrian teachers.

The data provided by the Americans is the reason for the way Table 2 is presented.

(Insert Table 2)

The Table shows:

1. The American teachers work more intensely with parents than their Austrian counterparts. This is obvious by looking at the response "used many times". The Americans give this response on average three times as often. However the American teachers also tick the answer "used few times" more often than the Austrians.

2. It is in accordance with these findings that American teachers tend less on average to expect that parents are not willing and able to cooperate.

3. When asked if they had used these methods, perhaps not this year but sometime previously, and considered them "workable", the average difference in the answers given by the two teacher-groups was relatively small.

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[13] Actually Becker and Epstein produced a "six-point" index with the help of a third question. I have omitted this third question for reasons of method.

[14] Epstein devotes at least a short time to this question. With regards to home-based reinforcement, it can be found in Krumm 1989, and regarding the cooperation of teachers with parents in cases of learning difficulties in Krumm 1990b.

4. Only two techniques seem to be used much more frequently by Austrian teachers:

(4) "The encouragement of parents to discuss television programmes with their children."

(7) "The agreement with parents to supervise homework."

Another way of looking at the data is possible by comparing the rank-orders of answers (see Table3).

(Insert Table 3)

Here we can see that:

1. The rank-correlations are all positive. The fact that they are not considerably higher is due to three items, i.e.

2. In both questions that form the basis of the rank-orders, the rank-positions differ considerably from each other in

(2) "Loaning books to parents"

(10)"Agreeing with parents that they supervise their child's homework"

(12)"Encouraging parents to observe in the classroom"

3. Without these items the correlations would be highly signficant without exception. Obviously teachers in Austria and the USA agree to a considerable extent on the assessment of the usefulness and applicability of PI-techniques - however great the differences in the practical application may be.

There may be various reasons for the considerable differences in the items mentioned in point 2, i.e.:

That Austrian teachers less frequently lend books could be due to the fact that school libraries in primary schools in the USA are more common and are equipped also for parents to use.

The Austrian teachers' dislike of parents observing in the classroom is maybe an indicator of the great divide between them and the parents, and of their desire to be the undisputed lord of "THEIR" classroom. For Austrian teachers (like the Germans) it goes without saying that they close the classroom door behind them - and the Austrian teacher is not allowed to open it to parents without the permission of the school authorities.

It was to be expected that supervision of homework would play a larger role in Austria: In the USA school lasts all day, in Austria half a day in which homework plays a considerable role. American teachers are about as unfamiliar with homework as

Austrian teachers are with "parents in the classroom".

6.3. Further Indicators of the Practice of PI in the USA and Austria

According to Table 2, American teachers pay considerably more attention to getting parents involved in the learning process at home than the Austrians. Is this data supported by other findings? The surveys could provide so much information - if only all the data were published. Only the following comparisons summarized here in Table 4 were possible however:

(Insert Table 4)

It is not important here whether the commitment to PI of American or Austrian teachers is satisfactory or not. What concerns us is that this commitment is again generally higher in the USA and this corresponds to the results in Table 2[15]. It seems that great differences exist between the two countries particularly concerning the question of parental participation 'in the classroom'.

6.4. A Comparison of the Attitudes of American and Austrian Teachers

The questionnaire contains an itemised scale to discover the teachers' attitudes towards PI. Becker and Epstein published their data for 6 of the total of 12 items, see Table 5.

(Insert Table 6)

The greatest differences between the two sets of teachers are apparent in items 1 and 2. These are the very items in which a positive or negative view of PI is most strongly expressed. The attitudes of the two teacher-groups thus correspond to what they say about how they use it in practice.

6.5. A Comparison of the Findings of the Analysis

Epstein and Becker have conducted several analyses to test hypotheses about influential factors on the practice of teachers. We have conducted these analyses as far as is possible also on the Austrian material. As details of the findings of the analyses (both correlation and regression analyses) are not of interest here, the following is merely a summary:

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[15] The differences are sometimes so small however that the 13% "special teachers" in the US-survey must be taken into account. They could have a profound influence as far as these questions are concerned.

1. If there are any significant correlations in the American and Austrian samples, then they are relatively low. The single exception being, in both samples, the influence of the grades.

2. The significant relationships in both groups point in the same direction.

Therefore:

1. Austrian teachers are just as consistent as the Americans in the way they answer the questions, and

2. Both sets of teachers appear to be influenced by the same school- and personal factors in their practice of PI (Krumm et al. 1990c).

7. A Discussion of the Central Results

The conclusive result of the comparative study is that American teachers are far more open-minded about Parent Involvement than Austrian teachers, and that they also put it into practice considerably more intensively than their Austrian, or German, colleagues[16].

Is this conclusion valid? A shadow can be cast on the validity of the differences due to ...

+ the data collection method which allows for many factors to insufficiently be controlled; in addition, due to the fact that these are reports written about oneself which are to a large extent influenced by a tendency to wish to see oneself, and to be seen, acting in a way that is socially desired.

  The practice of cooperation should of course be supplemented by observations.

+ the methodical weaknesses of the instruments which could also often not be sufficiently avoided in the German version in

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[16] No direct comparative survey between Austria and Germany is actually available. In comparing the empirical surveys in these two countries, the impression that one has suggests that Austrian and German teachers are similarly distanced from and disinterested in PI. The qualitative literature is also full of complaints about the attitude and actions of teachers in this regard (Krumm1988;Neubauer/Krumm 1989).

order not to detract from the possibility of comparison[17].

+ all the problems associated with comparative surveys which require the data-collection instruments to be in different languages.

+ weaknesses in the samples, particularly with regard to the important variable of 'grade level'.[18].

On the other hand the following argues for the validity of the results:

+ A relative consistency in the statements within the data from each specific country, as well as between the two countries: As experts in the subject, teachers by and large assess pedagogical problems in a very similar fashion. Additional evidence as to the validity is that the differences appear in all the questions that are concerned with the actions or the attitudes of the teachers regarding parent involvement.

+ The main argument for the validity is the fact that the teacher-data "correlates" with external criteria. If a German or Austrian visits American schools then he/she is surprised by their literally "open" nature: The doors of the (primary school) classrooms are more-often-than-not open and apparently being visited surprises neither pupil nor teacher. Just as striking as the fact that one continually meets parents in American schools - this almost never happens in German or Austrian schools unless they have come with a specific appointment to see a teacher.

Finally a finding from the questioning of parents also points towards the validity. In the parents' survey they were asked, among other things, how often the teacher had recommended the 14 methods (of PI) to them. Becker/Epstein have published the answers to 'several times and often' (Table 6):

(Insert Table 6)

Becker and Epstein - with the help of a questionnaire for

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[17] To give a few examples: The instruments seem hardly to have been constructed with theory in mind, some questions actually contain two questions, some items are negatively phrased, from an Austrian point of view central questions concerning the practice of homework in the USA are missing.

[18] Besides, the somewhat dissimilar construction of the samples may have caused the differences between American and Austrian teachers to be somewhat larger than they would be had the samples corresponded exactly.

principals - distinguished between teachers who, in the opinion of the principal, worked closely with parents and those who did not. As we cannot distinguish between these two sorts of teacher, and in addition cannot find out the precise size of these two US-groups, in order to calculate a US-average, we shall quote both sets of results[19]. The average lies somewhere between the two corresponding figures. Assuming that the group of "other teachers" is larger than that of "teacher leaders", then the figure used for comparison is presumably situated nearer the figure for the "other teachers".

The comparison thus shows that parents confirm the different direction between the two teacher groups more than clearly.[20]

So if a relative validity of the findings can thus be assumed, how could one then interpret the central conclusion - that is, the relatively large difference in the attitudes and practices of the two teacher-groups? As we can gather from the analysis data that no variable comes close to showing as much variance as the "system" or "tradition" factor, then we would like to suggest the following interpretation.

The greater commitment of American teachers in comparison to their Austrian (and German) counterparts may arise as a result of the following sometimes closely-linked characteristics of the systems,...

1. The differing histories in education. Compulsory schooling is first-and-foremost an invention of the ruling-classes in the Germanic countries - parents received no right of participation (Krumm 1989); In the USA schooling was the result of parental demand and was directly brought about by them (Tyack 1974, 15ff.).

2. The federal structure of the American education system (also a result of the history of schooling); in contrast, the state education system in Austria and Germany is centrally administered (at the national and regional levels). This federal - , and more democratic, school administration structure in the USA may lead to closer ties between parents and school, the centralized system of Austria and Germany to further distancing of the two.

3. The position of teachers: In the USA parents' representative are more involved in the hiring and firing of teachers and principals than in Austria or Germany. There teachers are

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[19] Also this relationship between the principal's assessment and the teachers' answers is a point in favour of the validity of the data.

[20] We shall not go into the details of Table 7 and how they could be interpreted here.

guaranteed life-long civil service status. For them the state is far more a sanctioning authority than the parents.

4. The incorporation of the kindergarten into US-state schools (again a result of history and ideology). The kindergartens in Austria and Germany never belong to the school. This may have a considerable influence on the parents' anxiety about visiting school.

5. The far greater interest shown, as I have already outlined, by both American educational science and the school administration towards parent involvement.

During the last hundred years parents, educationspecialist and democratically-minded people concerned with educational policy in Austria and Germany have become increasingly aware that, in a democratic society, parents should be involved in school-life. Through many years of struggle they have gradually managed to succeed in bringing about participatory rights, the likes of which Americans, who are used to rules and regulations, can only dream about (Dietze 1976, Kreuzer 1977, Mohrhardt 1979).

Why then has the apparently excellent parental right of participation in Austria and Germany achieved so little in comparison to the USA where there are much fewer official regulations.

Austrian and German parental rights - which are the result of a struggle for emancipation by the parents against the state and its servants in the school - have probably directed the attention of parents and teachers much too much towards the democratic problems of 'participation', 'right to information', 'control'...and much too little towards the educational problems which can be solved through cooperation: Towards 'mutual advice and help for teaching- and learning problems', towards 'educational tasks to be solved together', in short towards 'educational cooperation'.[21]

The orientation towards school constitutional rights leads to inventions like "being able to see a teacher at a certain hour during the week", "parents' evening", "participation groups",

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[21] The orientation of parental rights towards constitutional rights should not be played against an educational one. Both orientations are equally relevant.

Besides one can say that Austrian and German teachers work according to the regulations: They have particular hours in the week and particular days (once or twice per term) for discussion with parents ("Sprechstunden", "Sprechtage") and offer parents' evenings - it is only that their educational content is unsatisfactory (Neubauer/Krumm 1989, Krumm 1988, 1990b).

"voting regulations", "agendas"..., educational orientation leads to the invention of methods of parent involvement like those in Table 1, and this educational orientation is not in the minds of teachers nor hardly in the regulations, and certainly not in the "school tradition". It is also not in the tradition of teaching and research of the Austrian and German educational science (Krumm 1990b).

It might well be different in the USA: There, orientation towards parent involvement is in the school- and educational science tradition, and also in the minds of the teachers - but on average the "regulations" do not work adequately. Why they are so unsatisfactory and WHETHER, and if so, HOW they could be improved, is a different topic altogether.

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Table 1: Characteristics of Teachers in Surveys

(Teacher: n in USA = 3698 in A = 124/254)
(Parents: n in USA = 1269 in A = 1196

		% of Respondents		
		A	USA	
Grade Level	1	34	32	28
	3	30	34	30
	5	26	33	29
		100	100	13 <--
				100
Sex				
Female		69	91	
Male		31	9	
Education				
'Teacher's College'		74	52	BA -BA plus
University		26	47	MA -MA plus
Experience				
1- 5 years teaching		20	17	
6-10		21	32	
over 10 years		59	51	
Class Assignments				
Teach single class all day		42	55	
T. several classes dur.day		58	45	
Location of School				
Rural areas		44	32	
Urban areas		56	68	

TABLE 2: **PARENT INVOLVEMENT-TECHNIQUES: AUSTRIA - USA**

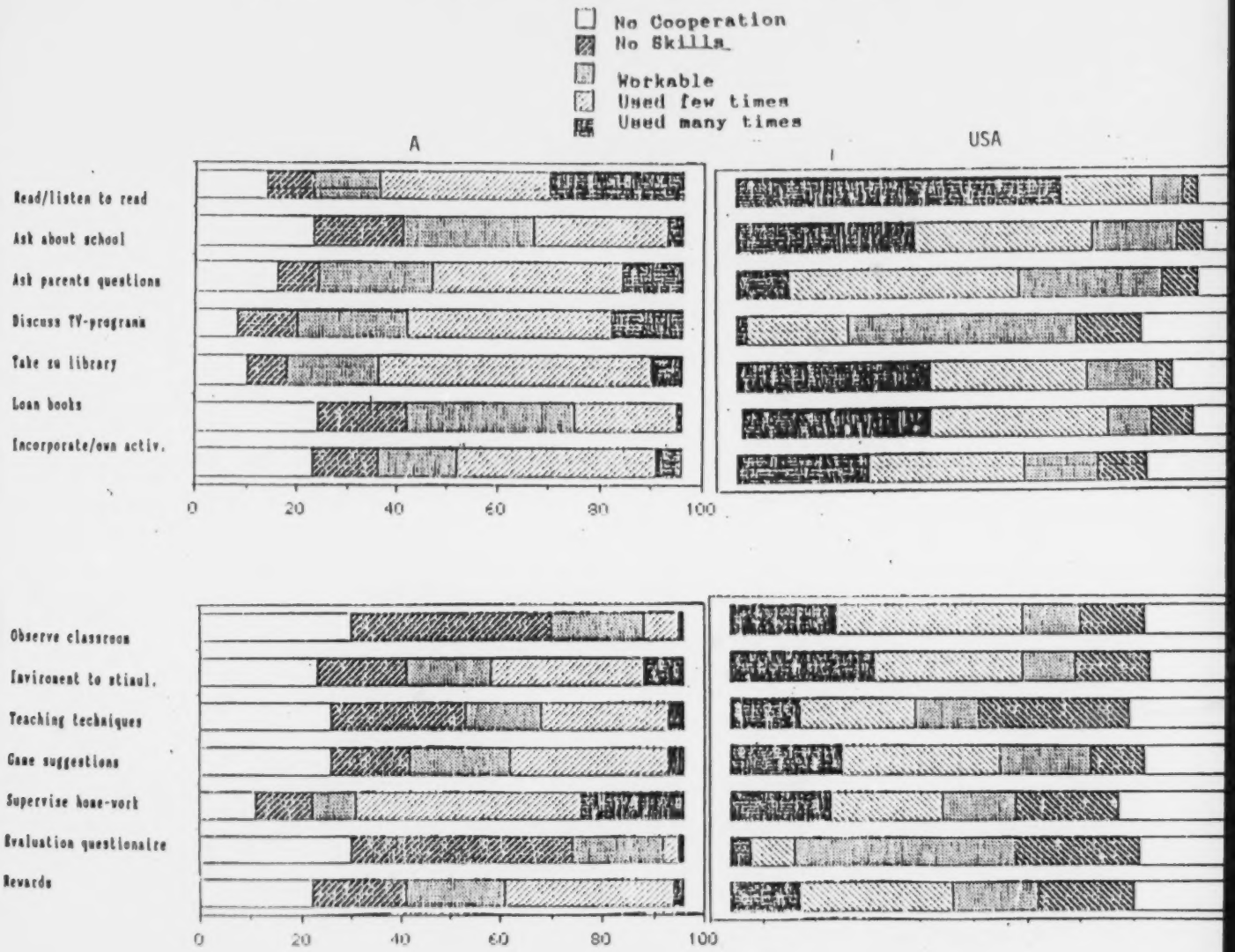

Table 3: Rankorders of parentinvolvement techniques

How often used?: 1 = many times
2 = a few times
3 = not this year

Can you use this technique successfully?
4 = no parents' cooperation
5 = not effective

	1		2		3		4		5	
	A	USA	A	USA	A	USA	A	USA	A	USA
1. Parents: read to child or to be read to	1	1	6	13	13	14	11	12	12	13
2. Parents: use books to loan	8	3	10	3	2	13	6	11	5	10
3. Parents: take child to library	4	2	5	5	3	9	10	10	13	13
4. Parents: ask Child about school	3	4	3	3	5	9	14	14	10	12
5. Child: ask parents questions	6	12	1	1	3	7	13	12	13	11
6. Family: watch and discuss TV show	13	14	12	12	1	1	5	4	5	6
7. Parents: incorporate child in own activities	6	7	4	5	11	7	6	6	9	9
8. Family: play learning games	8	7	8	5	5	4	3	6	8	8
9: Parents: use home environments to stimulate	5	5	9	9	10	12	6	9	5	5
10: Parents: contract to supervise and assist	2	9	2	11	14	7	12	1	11	3
11: Parents: contract to give rewards,penalities	11	10	7	8	5	5	9	3	4	4
12: Parents: observe classroom	12	8	13	2	7	11	1	6	2	6
13: Parents: learn teaching techniques	8	11	11	10	12	10	3	2	3	1
14: Parents: fill out evaluation form	14	13	14	14	2	7	1	4	1	2
Rho:	.69		.32		.27		.46		.74	

Table 4: Further Comparisons

1. When you use this parent involvement technique, do you SUGGEST to parents that they participate or do you REQUIRE that they participate as part of the childs assignment?

	A	USA
suggest	87	91
require	13	9

2. 'You have visited children's home this year'

no	80	80
yes	20	20

How often?

1-2 Children	15	?
3-5	4	?
5 and more	0.8	2

3. (Since the beginning of the school year) how many parents have been in your classroom

for observation?	14	?
for helping?	6	40

4. 'I discuss parent involvement techniques'

with each parent	55	65
as need arises	45	35

5. How often this school year have you... conducted workshops or group meetings (apart from school-wide 'parents-nights)?

never	92	?
1-2	6	?
3 and more	2	?

Table 5: 'We would value your professional judgement on the following questions...'

		agree	disagree
1. In this community PI is not an answer to the major problems of the schools--the schools must solve their problems on their on.	A	47	53
	USA	21	79
2. Teachers can only provide parents with ideas about how to help their children's schoolwork - teachers cannot influence parents to use these ideas.	A	81	19
	USA	58	42
3. Most parents - although they can teach their children to sew or use tools or play a sport - do not habe enough training to teach their children to read or to solve math problems.	A	45	55
	USA	48	52
4. Realistically, it is too much to ask parents to spend a full hour per day working with their children on basic skills or academic achievement.	A	61	39
	USA	52	48
5. If parents regularity spend time in the classroom, one result is that they usually make a greater effort to help their children to learn at home.	A	67	33
	USA	90	10
6. Many parents want more information sent home about the curriculum than most teachers provide.	A	47	53
	USA	54	46
7. Many parents seem to be uncomfortable spending time at the school - they seem to feel out-of-place here.	only A	73	27

Table 6: "... How often did this teacher want you to do each of these things?..."
(Answers: 'several' plus 'often')
('*'= P < 5%)

	A	USA	
		Teacher Leader	other Teachers
1. Read aloud to your child or listen to your child read:	16	68	51*
2. Use things at home to teach your child:	5	57	47*
3. Ask your Child about his/her school day:	7	49	42*
4. Play games with your child that help the child learn things:	8	35	28*
5. Visit the classroom to watch how the child is taught in school:	0.4	34	25*
6. Take your Child to a library:	6	25	17*
7. Borrow books from the teacher to give your child extra help:	3	21	16
8. Make a formal 'contract' with the child's teacher to supervise the child's homework or projects:	7	21	19
9. Watch a TV show with your child and talk about it later:	1	15	15